

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) An apparatus for continuously producing an artificial marble plate comprising:

upper and lower carrier films facing each other and receiving a raw material compound for the artificial marble plate into a gap therebetween, wherein the raw material is in contact with both the upper carrier film and the lower carrier film;

upper and lower horizontal heating plates supported by a frame and receiving the upper and lower carrier films into a gap therebetween, each including temperature controlling means and heating means for heating upper and lower surfaces of the raw material compound, wherein the upper heating plate is in contact with the upper carrier film and the lower heating plate is in contact with the lower carrier film; ~~by a same heat transmission manner to harden the raw material compound, a temperature of the upper and lower horizontal heating plates being same at their entire section; and~~

a pair of gaskets disposed at horizontal edges of the upper and lower carrier films for regulating thickness and width of the artificial marble plate obtained by hardening the raw material compound; and

a carrier film fixture, wherein both edges of the upper and lower carrier films are inserted into the carrier film fixture, and the upper and lower carrier films are continuously moved by the carrier film fixture,

wherein the upper and lower carrier films are released from the artificial marble plate.

2. (Previously Presented) The apparatus for continuously producing an artificial marble plate as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:

upper and lower carrier film feed unwinders for feeding the upper and lower carrier films to the gap between the upper and the lower horizontal heating plates;

a raw material feed tank for feeding the raw material compound for the artificial marble plate into the gap between the upper and lower carrier films;

a raw material overflow prevention block, disposed between the raw material feed tank

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and the lower horizontal heating plate, for preventing the raw material compound fed from the raw material feed tank from flowing over the gaskets;

a contact roll, disposed after the raw material overflow prevention block and before the upper horizontal heating plate, for bringing the upper carrier film into contact with the raw material compound;

a gasket-protecting film surrounding the gaskets to protect the gaskets;

gasket fixing members and a gasket fixing frame disposed over the gaskets, the gasket fixing members fixing the gasket to the gasket fixing frame;

vertically movable cylinders, disposed on the upper horizontal heating plate, for controlling the height of the upper horizontal heating plate;

upper and lower carrier film recovery winders, communicated with end parts of the upper and lower horizontal heating plates, for collecting the upper and lower carrier films from the artificial marble plate; and

a cutting unit, communicated with the upper and lower carrier film recovery winders, for cutting the artificial marble plate released from the upper and lower carrier films.

3. (Currently amended) The apparatus for continuously producing an artificial marble plate as set forth in claim 1, ~~further comprising a~~ wherein the carrier film fixture is, disposed under the upper carrier film and on the lower carrier film, the upper and lower carrier films being fixed to the carrier film fixture.

4. (Previously presented) The apparatus for continuously producing an artificial marble plate as set forth in claim 3, wherein the carrier film fixture includes:

a clamping pin;

a chain belt, the clamping pin being fixed to the chain belt;

a position adjusting gear for adjusting the position of the chain belt; and

a driving gear for driving the chain belt.

5. (Original) The apparatus for continuously producing an artificial marble plate as set forth in claim 1, wherein the heating means includes a hot water heater, a steam heater, or an electric heater unit.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Original) The apparatus for continuously producing an artificial marble plate as set forth in claim 1, wherein each of the gaskets is made of a circle-shaped or square-shaped tube or pipe.

8. (Original) The apparatus for continuously producing an artificial marble plate as set forth in claim 1, wherein the outer diameter or the height of each of the gaskets is 6 to 40 mm.

9. (Previously Presented) The apparatus for continuously producing an artificial marble plate as set forth in claim 1, wherein each of the gaskets is made of one material selected from the group consisting of polymer and metal; and

wherein the polymer includes polytetrafluoroethylene, nylon or rubber, and the metal includes stainless steel, aluminum or copper.

10. (Previously Presented) The apparatus for continuously producing an artificial marble plate as set forth in claim 1, wherein the gaskets disposed on the horizontal edges of the upper and lower films are spaced apart from each other by a distance of 500 to 1,300 mm.

11. (Original) The apparatus for continuously producing an artificial marble plate as set forth in claim 1, wherein each of the upper and lower carrier films is made of one or more materials selected from the group consisting of polyethylene, polyester, polypropylene and polyvinyl alcohol.

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12. (Original) The apparatus for continuously producing an artificial marble plate as set forth in claim 1, wherein each of the upper and lower carrier films has a thickness of 20 to 100 μm .

13-18. (Canceled)

19. (Previously presented) The apparatus for continuously producing an artificial marble plate as set forth in claim 1, wherein the gap between the upper and lower horizontal heating plates is constant in a horizontal direction.

20. (Currently amended) The apparatus for continuously producing an artificial marble plate as set forth in claim 1, wherein each of the upper and lower carrier films has a same thickness and is made of a same polymeric material[[L]]

21. (Canceled).